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## RESEARCH ON NUTRITION OF YOUNG WOMEN

A radio talk by Miss Sybil L. Smith, Office of Experiment Stations, broadcast Wednesday, May 5, 1937, in the Home Demonstration program, National Farm and Home Hour, by NBC and a network of 61 associated radio stations.

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Good afternoon, homemakers.

I know many of you listening today will be intensely interested in a new study of food requirements for health of ~~girls of the college age~~. I can't say exactly why, but it's a fact that we know less than we should about the dietary needs of young women -- and young men -- in the years of the late 'teens and early twenties. Let me tell you how the home economists of some of the Land Grant Colleges in the North Central States got started on a study aimed to gather such facts.

About a year and a half ago, a group of nutrition research workers from the State agricultural colleges in Kansas and Iowa, and the agricultural colleges at the State universities in Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin met to plan some cooperative research. They decided that the most useful thing they could do would be to study the food habits, nutrition, and food requirements, not of white rats, but of college girls. The consulting scientists agreed that there are signs that the dietary standards that have been set up for girls of the college age may not be adequate, or that the majority of girls of this age aren't keeping up to the standards. Maybe both things are wrong. Maybe not. Anyway, this group of nutrition workers set out to gather facts.

During this past year they have collected facts about the diets of some 800 girls attending these 6 Land Grant colleges. They had the cooperation of girls living under the different conditions that usually are to be found in a State college.

Some of the girls are living in dormitories where the food service is planned by a dietitian. Some are living in the homes of townspeople, and are eating their meals at drug store counters. Some are living in cooperative houses where the meals are carefully planned by the students themselves to get the most in nourishment for the limited amount of money they have to spend. Others are in sororities where, without careful planning, feast may follow famine, as the food money is spent most heavily on the eatables for entertainment functions.

So, you see, the 800 girls have been living under different conditions. That will give added value to the findings of the studies. Each of the girls takes a basal metabolism test to determine how much work her body is doing when she's at rest, and to give a basis for figuring out her minimum requirements for the fuel foods. Each undergoes a blood analysis so that the scientists may know whether or not she is anemic. Each will be

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measured at intervals so we may have the facts about her body build, and how her bones, fat, and muscles change during the four years of her college life.

Then, these 800 girls and many more besides have kept records of the number of servings of all foods eaten during one week. A few of the cooperating girls have kept detailed records of the actual quantities of food eaten day by day over long periods of time and have weighed out duplicate samples for analysis. A few others are cooperating in metabolism studies, weighing every bit of food eaten, and submitting duplicate samples for analysis, and also collecting the body waste for analysis so as to determine the balance of each food constituent.

Well, the first year's work on the whole project has been more than half completed, and the cooperating scientists have just held a meeting at Iowa State College to discuss the results and to plan for next year. My associate, Miss Mabel Dickson has just returned from this meeting. She brought back pages and pages of tabulated data, tangible proof that the work is well underway.

I know all of you listeners will realize that we don't yet have enough facts to justify us in giving you any conclusions either about the food habits of the college girls in these North Central States, or about the wisdom or the folly of those habits. But Mr. Salisbury has asked me to say something about the facts revealed by the reports on what foods the cooperating girls ate in one week. I do so a little hesitantly, because I fear someone may get the impression that I am giving out a statement on the typical diets of college girls. Please understand that I am not. The reports from these 700 college girls may be typical. They may not be. We can't say as yet.

Now, bearing that in mind, here are just a few facts about their diets:

There were 132 college freshmen in the group reporting from one college. Fourteen of them drank no milk, 4 ate no citrus fruit or tomatoes, 55 had not more than one green or yellow vegetable a day--remember that this includes salad greens--during the week on which they reported. Also 37 of the 132 freshmen ate no eggs. These things -- milk, citrus fruits, tomatoes, green and yellow vegetables, and eggs are protective foods. From another college 52 juniors reported. Ten of them drank no milk, 28 had not more than one green or yellow vegetable a day and 11 ate no eggs during the week under report. In one of the best dairy States in the country, 17 out of 179 girls reporting -- nearly one out of each 10 -- drank no milk during the week under report. For the same group 100 had not more than one green or yellow vegetable a day and 84 -- nearly one-half of the girls, ate no eggs during the week.

Now those are the poorest figures. They show the worst lacks--the worst failures to reach what are generally considered good dietary standards for girls in their late 'teens and early twenties. If that is the worst, I should say the results of the study are encouraging. But I can't say anything conclusive as yet about the findings. Not this year, nor for several years. Five years, eight years from now this study will be giving you parents of the girls who are now starting in high school or junior high some guides

to the diet that they should follow while they are in the college years. I hope that we'll be reporting results to you in the Home Demonstration and other Farm and Home Hour programs during the coming years.

In the meantime, it will do no harm to caution your college age daughters to be sure they get the protective foods into their diets. And that should go down all right with your daughters of these ages, because, by and large, the protective foods are not the foods that interfere with the current vogue of the willowy figure in the collegiate years.

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and that there are many things that we do not know  
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